

PARANORMAL UNDERGROUND®

Volume 18, Issue 12

December 2025

CHARM CITY
PARANORMAL

THE DJINN

Spirits of Fire

A Strange Haunting
in Curtis Park

Ghost Stories From
The Hawthorne Hotel

The Valensole
UFO Incident

ALSO INSIDE:

4 YULETIDE GHOST STORIES

MYTHS, ANGELS & THE LONGING TO WAKE UP

THE HOLCOMB-GRAVES ABDUCTIONS

SHAMAN WINDWALKER'S CHRISTMAS VISIT



A monthly
PODCAST
about all things
**SPIRITUAL &
SUPERNATURAL**

With ...



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Underground*



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*Psychic Intuitive
& Paranormal
Researcher*



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*Author & Energy
Healer*

TUNE IN TODAY ON ITUNES, SPOTIFY & MORE!

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Her magazine experience includes roles as senior and managing editor for several niche publications and online media, where she has overseen editorial direction, content development, and investigative features. With a lifelong passion for the unexplained, Cheryl has personally experienced a wide range of



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His passion for discovery fuels his fascination with the unknown, from haunted history to modern unexplained events. Corey approaches investigation with an

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CHAD WILSON

Chad is co-creator and publisher of *Paranormal Underground* magazine and co-producer of *Paranormal Underground Radio*. His interest in the paranormal led to the creation of ParanormalUnderground.net, a platform dedicated to exploring unexplained phenomena, investigative research, and personal encounters.



Chad has investigated with East Tennessee Paranormal Research Society and counts Waverly Hills Sanatorium, the Villisca Axe Murder House, Bobby Mackey's Music World, the Queen Mary, Queen Anne Hotel, Hotel Alex Johnson, Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary, and private residences among his investigations. His passion for the field extends to documenting firsthand experiences and sharing them through in-depth articles, interviews, and multimedia projects. He advocates for open-minded inquiry and collaboration within the paranormal community.

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Had a Brush With the Unknown?

If you've had a paranormal encounter and would like to share your story, we'd love to hear from you! Email us at paranormalunderground@live.com and tell us about your experience. Your account could be featured in an upcoming issue of *Paranormal Underground* magazine.

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4 EERIE OLDE CHRISTMAS GHOST STORIES THAT STILL HAUNT THE HOLIDAYS

By Orrin Grey, The Lineup

While we mostly associate spooky stories with Halloween, for generations in England there has been a strong link between the ghost story and Christmas. Of course, there's Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, which is perhaps the most famous Christmas ghost story of all.

Yet the tradition of holiday ghost stories dates back at least as far as the Victorians, when people gathered around a roaring fire to keep the cold at bay and share tales that sent a different sort of chill down the spine. Remember: There was no TV or radio back then, so Christmas gatherings were given over to friendly conversation, indoor games, and the telling of tales. And what better kind of stories to tell on the longest, darkest nights of the year than ghost stories?

It was a tradition perhaps most famously practiced by M.R. James, widely considered the master of the English ghost story, who wrote a new spectral tale every year at Christmas. James would invite some of his fellow teachers and favorite students to his chamber, where he would treat them to a reading.

The best ghost stories for Christmas have a few details in common, even if they don't take place during the holidays. They possess such a convivial sense that you feel a part of the crowd, gathering close to the fire to hear a scary story that just may be real. Such ghost stories remind listeners that they're inside someplace warm, while hinting at the limitless dark that presses in from outside.

The tales I've gathered for you today date from a little after the true Victorian period, but all of them are in the public domain and available to read for free online. You can peruse them yourself this holiday season — or, if you're feeling whimsical, you can revive the grand tradition of holiday ghost stories and read them aloud to family and friends when the evening grows dark.

1. 'Between the Lights' by E.F. Benson (1912)

E.F. Benson was a protégé of James, and it shows in his ghost stories. Nevertheless, Benson brings much of his



own style to the telling, including a sense of fun and sly self-deprecation that never blunts the chill.

Between the Lights may not be his best tale. As the teller in the story warns, "It has no apparatus about it at all. You will probably all say that it was nothing, and wonder why I was frightened." But what it *does* have is a perfect Christmas Eve ghost story setting. A group of friends gather in a darkened room around a blazing fire to compete "with each other in blood, bones, skeletons, armor and shrieks."

If *Between the Lights* merely whets your appetite for more of Benson's delightful scary stories, I recommend following it up with one of my favorites, *How Fear Departed From the Long Gallery*.



2. 'Lost Hearts' by M.R. James (1904)

Though M.R. James tended to tell his stories at Christmas, they seldom take place during the holidays. However, there's a kind of wintry feeling in *Lost Hearts*, even as its telling spans a whole year.

In some ways, *Lost Hearts* is a remarkably straightforward ghost story, yet still every bit as chilling as some of James' stranger tales. It contains the undercurrent of sorcery that infuses some of his very best stories. It's also an example of a tale where the ghosts themselves are at times no more terrible than the men with whom they interact ...

3. 'Smee' by A.M. Burrage (1931)

If the bit of hide and seek at the beginning of *Between the Lights* made you hungry for more ghostly games in a big, dark house on Christmas Eve, then A.M. Burrage's *Smee* is the Christmas ghost story for you.

Even the story's strange name gives a chill. As the tale unfolds, those chills only multiply. Like jokes, the trick of a great ghost story is not in the phenomena it describes, but in the telling. *Smee* succeeds wonderfully in this regard. It's a layered tale that gives you all the particulars up front.

Yet the accumulation of eerie details still delivers the

chills, and the story's frightening climax is tailor-made for spectral tales told around a warm fire.

4. 'The Searcher of the End House' by William Hope Hodgson (1910)

William Hope Hodgson's name is seeing a much-deserved resurgence in popularity among aficionados of the weird tale. He's often held in similar regard to pioneers such as H.P. Lovecraft. While Hodgson may be best known for his novel of classic cosmic horror *The House on the Borderland*, he wrote widely and prolifically across a variety of subjects, with many of his best stories dealing with strange goings-on upon the sea.

One of his greatest creations is the paranormal investigator Carnacki, the Ghost Finder. Besides containing that delightful Christmas ghost story touch of a tale being told around smokes and drinks and a crackling fire, Carnacki's stories combine strange "outside forces" with occasional doses of Scooby Doo-like revelations for what at first appeared to be spectral happenings.

The Searcher of the End House is a fine example, with one of the most unsettling uses of footprints in the history of the ghost story, and with a mysterious ending that leaves us with as many questions as answers. ♦

CHARM CITY PARANORMAL

EXPLORES AMERICA'S MOST HAUNTED PLACES

By Cheryl Knight-Wilson

With an emphasis on method over mythology, Baltimore, Maryland-based Charm City Paranormal examines reportedly haunted locations across the United States. Led by investigators Michael Richey and David Kneller, the team's investigations span abandoned asylums and hospitals, prisons, private residences, and other sites where past events continue to raise unanswered questions.

Rather than chasing spectacle, the team approaches each investigation with patience and skepticism, allowing time, environment, and context to guide what unfolds. Historical research plays a central role in their work, providing a framework for understanding reported activity and helping distinguish between what can be explained and what remains unresolved.

Charm City Paranormal's investigations combine carefully composed visuals with straightforward documentation of findings. Cinematic elements are used to establish atmosphere and context, not to dramatize results. Evidence is presented transparently, with space for interpretation, and without pressure to draw conclusions where none can be confidently made.

In the following Q&A, Michael discusses how Charm City Paranormal began, how the team balances production quality with investigative integrity, and what they believe matters most when exploring the unknown. His perspective offers insight into a methodical, experience-driven approach to paranormal investigation — one rooted in curiosity, discipline, and respect for the history of the places they enter.

* * * * *

Q: Please tell us a little about yourselves.

Michael: I was an IT professional for 12 years before making the switch to media production a little over five years ago. From an early age, I have always had a fascination with technology, learning to tinker with and assemble



Led by investigators Michael Richey (right) and David Kneller (left), Charm City Paranormal enters each location with a focus on observation, context, and methodical documentation.

computers, cellphones, and other electronic devices. When the world shut down in 2020, I was out of a job and given the opportunity to explore new options. I have always created art to some capacity but never attempted to make a profession out of it until recently. Outside of work, I enjoy playing guitar, video games, graphic design and drawing, hiking, and rummaging through antique malls and flea markets.

David is a chef that has spent over two decades honing his craft in kitchens of every kind, from neighborhood pizza joints and bustling diners, to the rarefied world of three Michelin star restaurants, such as Grace in Chicago. He has collaborated with some of the most respected chefs across the world and competed in high-level culinary competitions nationwide. Each experience has helped shape



The team's investigations are rooted in careful observation and historical research, allowing each location's environment and past to guide what is documented rather than forcing a narrative.

his diverse approach to food. Blending genuine passion for flavor with a refined technique, he creates an experience that leaves every guest satisfied and wanting more. These experiences have created a desire for him to pursue opening a restaurant and marketplace of his own in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, called The Market At 59. Outside of the kitchen, David enjoys hiking, camping, spending time with his dogs and investigating the paranormal.

Q: When was Charm City founded?

Michael: Charm City Paranormal was founded in May 2020 after having a truly bizarre experience inside an abandoned asylum here in Maryland. I didn't go into this place looking for anything paranormal. The pandemic happened and I was left with lots of free time to explore old and new hobbies. I decided to pick up photography as a way to get out of the house and give me something to do. Urban exploration, or Urbex, was the perfect mix of what I was looking for: History, old buildings, and photography all in one. I started doing research on old, abandoned places in my area and came across a massive asylum complex that looked perfect for what I wanted to do.

I brought a friend along that was familiar with the place

and we trekked through these overgrown woods for about 15 minutes before arriving on site. After hours of hopping in and out of the asbestos-ridden ruins, we started to head back to my car when we came across one final building we hadn't explored yet. I said to my friend, "Let's go check this one out. Ten minutes tops, then we'll leave."

We climbed through a broken window frame and began exploring the inside of this massive housing ward. It was littered with school papers, documents, furniture, and old medical equipment. Once the facility closed down, everyone including the staff walked out one day and never came back, leaving everything behind. It was crazy to see all of that stuff still in there. While we're snapping photos and talking about what we were seeing, I heard a sound come from down the hallway through the threshold of a door I was standing next to. I can only describe it as inhuman. It was a dissonant scream, coupled with wailing and moaning all at once. It was the most bizarre sound I had ever heard, so much so that I froze for what felt like an eternity before I forced my body to slowly turn away from the threshold and bolt out of the room. I didn't say a word, but my friend was smart enough to run with me. Once we were on the road again, I tried my best to explain what I just heard but couldn't.



Michael is a former IT professional turned media producer who co-founded Charm City Paranormal in 2020.

We took 10 minutes to recoup before curiosity got the better of me and I suggested we head back in and at least peek our heads through the threshold to see if someone had been messing with us. I know what you're thinking. I don't know what's wrong with me either. I calmed down and thought to myself that maybe someone had spotted us in the distance and decided to set up down the hallway close to where we were, hoping to scare the crap out of us. I hesitated for a moment before stepping through that threshold, only to see that no one was around.

It rained the night before, and because the location was so old and dilapidated, water easily accumulated in hallways and day rooms throughout the building. I look down and see wet footprints on the ground leading from a puddle in the middle of the hallway up to where we were currently standing. I stared at them for a moment before I felt a pit in my stomach. Something about the footprints was off. I noticed these were bare footprints. In a place like this, no one would dare walk around barefoot unless they were okay with slicing their feet to bits on piles of

shattered glass and rusted metal. They were also abnormally large. I wear a size 12 shoe, and when I placed my foot up next to one of the prints to compare, it looked to be a size 15 or 16, maybe larger.

These prints led from the puddle in the middle of the hallway all the way up to the threshold of the door where we were standing on the opposite side of just 10 minutes prior. At one point it looked like two left feet had stepped toward us, perfectly paired next to each other. The prints extended from the puddle about 15 feet out to the opposite side of the threshold, stopped, and went no further — not left, right, or back from where they came. They just stopped in their tracks. Something felt off about the whole thing, and I told my friend it was time to go. We talked about it the whole way home.

I had a GoPro strapped to me that was recording our entire exploration, and after reviewing the footage, I was shocked to learn we captured clear voices, apparitions, and odd malfunctions during this trip. Immediately, I was hooked. My curiosity had overcome my fear, and my passion for the paranormal was born. I was a collaborative creator for the first couple of years before meeting David. We met through a mutual friend and became fast friends. Eventually, I asked David to join me as a full-time member and since then, we've gone on dozens of investigations all over the United States.

Q: Your investigation videos combine cinematic visuals with real investigations. How do you balance storytelling and authenticity in your productions?

Michael: This was a difficult process starting out. Being so new to the paranormal community and video production, I had no idea how I should approach any of this or how I should present my evidence. From what I had gathered in the beginning, people wanted authenticity and real evidence without all the gimmicks, so that's what I aimed for. I didn't care about lighting, audio, or video quality or all the other bits and pieces that go into making something memorable that would stand out.

After spending some time looking at what bigger, more well-known creators were doing, it was clear there was a line between entertainment and authentic investigations. I don't want to create anything misleading, but I also don't want to make something even I don't want to watch. If I went over the top with production, I was worried people would perceive my work as fake or sensational. If I kept it as raw as possible, it would get buried in a sea of videos doing the exact same thing. A couple of years into the journey, I started to find myself burnt out of the format I was following. I wasn't creating content I enjoyed, and I think that's the most important aspect of being a creative — create things that make you happy and you



Charm City Paranormal's YouTube videos present each investigation as a documented experience, combining restrained cinematography with unedited moments that allow viewers to assess the evidence for themselves. (Photo: Michael Castro)

want to see first, then send it out into the world and let it find the people it resonates with most.

After a while, I started to feel more confident in creating something different while remaining genuine and no longer felt I needed to prove that, so I began experimenting with a new format. I studied professional cinematographers, directors, and creatives and tried to implement what I had learned from them into the work I was doing in a way that wouldn't take away from the investigations. Multiple camera angles, various lights, cinematic B-roll and real historical accounts tied into an introduction before the investigation to give the audience a background on the location.

I wanted to show people that it is possible to make a real paranormal investigation look good without taking away from its authenticity. It reignited a passion for the work and allowed me to unlock a new level of creative freedom I didn't have before. It was a long process to find what worked and what didn't, but eventually I was able to find a balance by combining this newfound knowledge of

cinematography with what got me started in the first place: a genuine passion for the paranormal and history, shown in a way that can keep people engaged while being committed to presenting our findings in an honest, authentic way.

Q: What's been your most challenging shoot or investigation to date?

Michael: We filmed a series of seven investigations over the course of nine days in March 2025, and that was the most exhausting experience I have had so far. It took 50 hours of driving and over 2,800 miles to complete it.

We slept on average two to four hours a night before packing up and heading to the next location. At one point, we got an hour and a half of sleep before driving nine hours to the next location to film for 12 hours. It was absolutely brutal, but we captured some of the best footage we have ever filmed on that trip, and it made the long, sleepless nights totally worth it.

Q: In your view, what is the most critical element of a successful paranormal investigation?

Michael: Debunking always comes first before assuming it's paranormal, because 99% of the time, the odd noise, creak, or triggered device can be explained in some way. Patience, an open mind, and an honest approach will make or break the investigation.

Energy doesn't lie, and you can't convince the energy in a space of who or what you are no matter how hard you try to hide it. A guise only temporarily works on the living, so imagine what an infinite source of energy can see from where it's at. When interacting with energies, I let them know I am open to communicating with them, then I wait. It can take hours before anything happens. Sometimes you get nothing at all, and that's OK. If you close your mind and your energy off to what's around you, nothing is going to come out and interact.

Q: How do you ensure transparency when presenting evidence to your audience?

Michael: This is a tough one. The audience is always changing and growing, so new people are finding us for the first time and may be skeptical. Consistency is just as important when it comes to content creation in general, and I try hard to keep the presentation the same with small tweaks to redundant but equally important things, such as color grading, audio, and so on, allowing me to develop my skills while maintaining a level of integrity that our audience can expect.

When we do find anything on our recordings, I try to present it in a way that cuts straight to the chase and can create some kind of discussion about various perspectives and opinions from the audience. I share my thoughts and any rationales I may have in each video, explaining what it may or may not be, and ultimately leave it up to the viewer to decide for themselves if it's paranormal or not.

EVPs and spirit box responses are, by far, the most difficult pieces of evidence to present, but I still try to do so honestly with what I think is being said and most of the time annotate the responses with a (?) at the end of them to let the audience members know that this is what I personally think is being said but am not totally sure.

Transparency is a big part of the presentation for us, and I take many steps to ensure that they know that.

Q: What dream locations or historical sites are still on your wish list to investigate?

Michael: I've always wanted to investigate Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum in West Virginia. That place has intense history and paranormal accounts that I have to see for myself. The Bell Witch Cave in Tennessee is another one I would really like to investigate. It's supposedly the only paranormal incident that anyone is aware of that resulted in a death, that of a man named John Bell Sr. There are other reports that state a lethal dose of arsenic is what killed him, but I still want to confirm for myself if there's anything paranormal in or around that cave.

Q: What advice would you give to aspiring investigators who want to document their experiences on film or social media?

Michael: Be sincere in everything you do. Every challenge you overcome will put you one step closer to achieving your goals. Don't be afraid to put yourself out there and create honest, authentic content. You are a gift to this world, and people deserve to know who you are and what you're capable of.

Q: Finally, what else should our readers know about you, your team, or your mission?

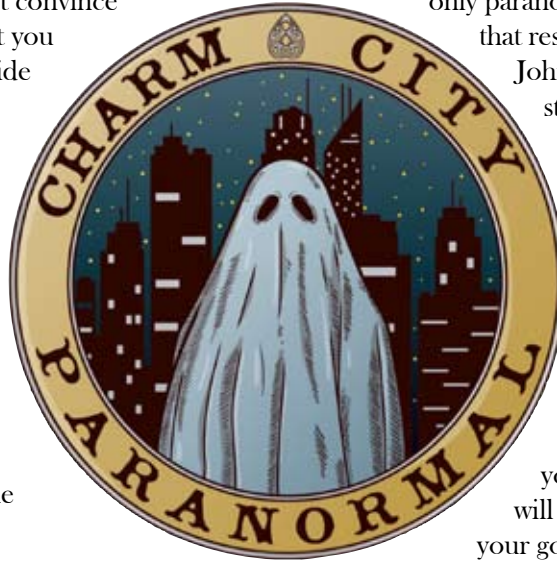
Michael: Our main focus is to validate experiences and claims made by property owners, other fellow investigators, or curious minds watching at home. We love history and sharing the stories of the past in a way that may intertwine with our interactions while investigating in an effort to validate the haunting.

I've been doing this for over five years now and have had an endless amount of opportunities to switch to being an "entertainment" content creator, but that would destroy the foundation of why I started doing all of this to begin with. We love the paranormal and have no intention of changing how we do things. If you want real investigations with a cinematic approach, you've come to the right place. Honesty and integrity are the heart of what we do.

If you'd like to watch our investigations, you can find them on [YouTube](#) and [StreamBeaconTV](#) under Charm City Paranormal.

* * * * *

For more information about Charm City Paranormal, visit the team's [website](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages. ♦



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MYTHS, ANGELS & THE LONGING TO WAKE UP: THE PRISON OF PERCEPTION

BY CHAD WILSON

Author's Note: I didn't plan to write this article.

The idea arrived in the middle of the night, pulling me out of a dream already half-formed and impossible to ignore. Lying awake in the dark, I reached for my phone, searched the phrases that had surfaced in my mind, and emailed them to myself before they could slip away. By morning, the pull was still there. I sat down and wrote — not to offer answers, but to explore the idea as an intriguing thought experiment.

Across cultures and centuries, humanity keeps circling the same quiet, unsettling question: What if this isn't the real world? From Plato's cave to modern theories of simulated reality, the suspicion that existence itself may be a kind of enclosure refuses to fade. It surfaces wherever people speak of awakening, enlightenment, or "seeing behind the veil." The language changes, but the intuition remains — a sense that something about reality is curated, constrained, or incomplete.

This idea does not emerge only in moments of philosophical abstraction. It appears most vividly when life feels pre-scripted, surveilled, or oddly unreal, as if the rules were written elsewhere and handed down without explanation. Myths arise from this tension. They are not escapist fantasies so much as symbolic attempts to articulate unease about perception itself.

Eden and the First Act of Awareness

Seen through this lens, the story of the Garden of Eden reads less like a moral fable and more like an origin myth for consciousness. When Eve eats from the tree of knowledge, the immediate consequence is not death but awareness. "Their eyes were opened." Innocence dissolves. Self-awareness begins. The punishment is exile, not annihilation — removal from a closed, protected system into a world where perception carries weight and responsibility.

In this symbolic reading, the serpent is not merely a villain but a catalyst. It represents curiosity, doubt, and



the dangerous act of questioning imposed rules. Whether understood as Satan, trickster, or metaphor, the serpent introduces a destabilizing idea: What if ignorance was the condition of paradise? What if the fall was not from grace, but from comfort?

Angels, Archons, and the Machinery of Order

This tension between order and awareness runs through religious cosmologies everywhere. Angels, for instance, are often softened in modern imagination into



gentle guardians, but scripture describes something far more austere. Biblical angels guard gates, deliver ultimatums, and execute judgment. They do not explain themselves. They enforce.

Symbolically, angels function as agents of structure — embodiments of law, hierarchy, and boundary. They preserve the separation between what may be known and what must remain forbidden. In that sense, angels resemble wardens more than guides. They do not ask whether the system is fair; they ensure that it continues. If reality itself were a kind of spiritual enclosure — defined by limits on memory, perception, and lifespan — angels would not need to be cruel to sustain it. They would only need to be loyal.

This same role reappears later in Gnostic thought under a different name: the Archons. These beings are not always portrayed as evil, but as ignorant — rulers who mistake their limited domain for ultimate reality. Their power lies in administration rather than malice. They enforce laws of existence while remaining blind to what lies beyond them.

What if awakening begins by questioning reality itself?

From Angels to Aliens: Updating the Myth

As religious authority waned, these archetypes did not disappear. They simply changed costumes. Angels became aliens. Visions became sightings. Heavenly chariots became unidentified craft. The symbols evolved, but the questions did not. Are we alone? Are we being watched? Is there a larger structure we barely glimpse?

Even some scientific skeptics found themselves unsettled by what they encountered. Late in life, professor and astronomer J. Allen Hynek suggested that the UFO phenomenon might not be purely physical at all, but something that intersected with consciousness and belief. Rather than visitors from distant planets, the phenomenon seemed to behave more like a mirror — responsive, elusive, resistant to material explanation.

Symbolically, aliens represent the other: intelligences that do not obey our assumptions about time, space, or biology. They disturb us not because they are necessarily hostile, but because they imply that reality is larger and less controlled than we are taught. They crack the illusion of closure.



Secrecy, Control, and the Prison Narrative

Wherever this sense of enclosure exists, stories of secrecy follow. Hidden knowledge, suppressed truths, forbidden archives — these narratives thrive wherever people feel powerless. In mythic terms, secrecy becomes part of the prison itself. Not bars and walls, but carefully managed stories about what is possible, permissible, or real.

Yet secrecy does not require a grand cosmic conspiracy. Governments withhold information. Institutions protect stability. Cultures resist ideas that threaten shared meaning. Often, the “cover-up” is simply humanity struggling to live with uncertainty. The danger lies not in acknowledging that information is limited, but in replacing uncertainty with rigid belief.

This is where modern reinterpretations of Gnosticism take hold. Concepts such as *loosh*, introduced by human consciousness researcher Robert Monroe, reframe existence as an energetic ecosystem in which emotional experience has value. While later interpretations emphasized fear and suffering, Monroe ultimately concluded that the highest-quality loosh was unconditional love — not pain.

When merged with Gnostic cosmology, loosh theory

transforms the Archons into interdimensional harvesters and Earth into a “prison planet.” Taken literally, this worldview collapses into paranoia. Taken symbolically, it becomes a powerful metaphor for systems — psychological, political, and economic — that thrive on fear, division, and unexamined obedience.

Gnosis as Rebellion and Return

Gnostic reinterpretations of biblical figures deepen this critique. In some traditions, Elohim (a Hebrew word used for God) is not the supreme, unknowable God, but a lesser being bearing divine names as misdirection. Cain and Abel cease to be merely moral opposites and become cosmic symbols. Violence enters the world not solely through human failure, but through a fractured creation governed by incomplete knowledge and abandonment.

Sethian Gnosticism pushed this idea further, teaching that a “seed” of humanity carries a divine spark capable of awakening through gnosis — direct knowing. Salvation was not obedience, but remembrance. Knowledge was not sin, but liberation. It is no coincidence that orthodox institutions attacked these ideas fiercely. A system that teaches people they are already divine but merely asleep is difficult to govern.

In modern times, thinkers and spiritual dissidents have returned to these themes not as literal cosmology, but as tools for personal liberation. Their shared insight is simple and unsettling: Belief systems are useful until they harden into cages.

When viewed this way, angels, Archons, aliens, and even algorithms collapse into the same symbolic role. They represent constraint — the forces that maintain order, manage perception, and discourage inquiry. The prison, if it exists, may not be imposed from outside at all. It may be built from stories we stop questioning.

When Awareness Becomes the Path

Historically, attempts to escape this prison through force — whether through technology, ritual, or secret knowledge — fail. The escape route, if it exists, has always been inward. Philosophers, mystics, and scientists alike converge on the same quiet doorway: critical thinking, self-awareness, and humility before the unknown.

To question reality is not to reject it. It is to engage with it honestly. The danger is not asking whether the world is a prison. The danger is believing any single answer so completely that curiosity dies.

Perhaps the truest form of liberation is not discovering that we are trapped, but realizing that we are allowed to ask why — and that no warden, angelic or otherwise, can fully prevent that awakening once it begins. ♦

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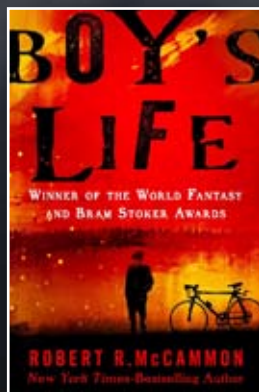
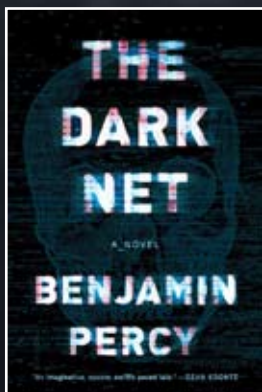
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GHOST STORIES FROM SALEM'S HAWTHORNE HOTEL

BY CHERYL KNIGHT-WILSON

In winter, when Salem's streets empty and the festive glow fades, the Hawthorne Hotel can feel less like a cozy escape and more like a portal between past and present — where long-stayed memories linger, and some say, never leave. On cold December nights, when snow muffles the sound of traffic and the Common lies nearly empty, the hotel's presence feels heavier, as though the building itself is listening.

Built in 1925 and named for Salem native Nathaniel Hawthorne, the Hawthorne is at once stately and understated: 93 rooms, classic New England-style elegance, and a history rooted in Salem's maritime past. Over the decades, it has hosted more than a million guests, spanning generations — a continuous stream of comings and goings that many locals believe helped accumulate the tales that now follow. Weddings, holiday parties, and quiet winter getaways have all unfolded within its walls, layering celebration and solitude in equal measure.

Those layers, some believe, don't simply fade when the guests depart, but settle into the rhythms of the building itself, becoming part of its character and atmosphere over time. But for a hotel steeped in respectability and tradition, why do so many visitors come back with ghost stories?

Rooms With a Reputation: 325 and 612

The lore around the Hawthorne tends to cluster around two specific rooms — what might be called the hotel's haunted “hot spots.” According to Historic Hotels of America, “Room 325 is the most haunted room in the hotel, while Room 612 and the sixth floor have had reports of a ghostly woman walking the halls.”

These room numbers have become part of Salem's modern folklore, passed from guest to guest in hushed conversations at the front desk and in late-night online reviews. In Room 325, reports stretch from subtle to shocking, according to Salem Ghosts. Guests have claimed to hear a baby crying in the night when no child is present.

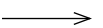


Built in 1925, the historic Hawthorne Hotel in Salem combines classic New England elegance with a legendary reputation for restless spirits and unexplained late-night encounters. (Photo: Fletcher6 via Wikimedia Commons)

Lights flicker or turn on and off by themselves. Faucets sometimes run without warning.

Others have described the disquieting sensation of invisible hands tugging at their sheets or waking up convinced they felt someone brush their hair. What makes these accounts especially unsettling is their consistency across decades, despite guests having no connection to one another.

On the sixth floor — especially outside Room 612 — visitors and staff have sometimes glimpsed a dim, near-translucent figure of a woman in white drifting through the hallway or lingering near the door. Some say she peers in the mirror, while others says that she vanishes when they approach, as reported by Ghost City Tours. Within the



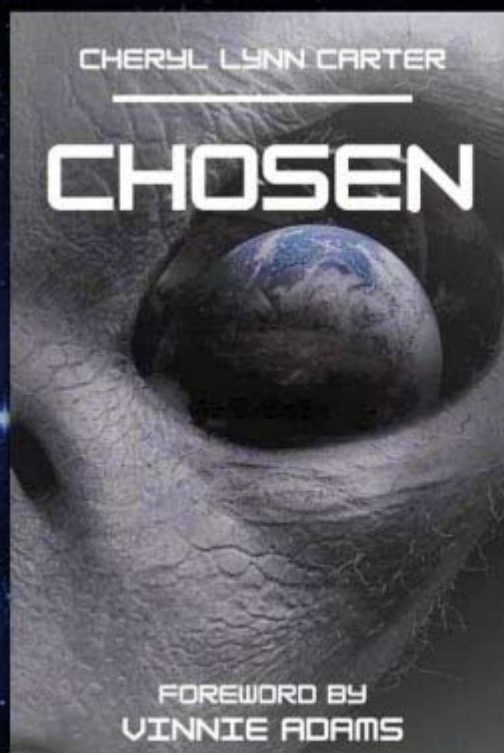


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Guests and staff at the Hawthorne Hotel have long reported a pattern of unsettling activity — from unexplained sounds and moving objects to the recurring apparition of a woman in white and disturbances centered around Rooms 325 and 612.

room itself, more than one guest has described a pervasive feeling of being watched, of sharing the space with someone unseen. Several accounts note that these sensations intensify late at night, when the hallway lights dim and foot traffic all but disappears.

These reports aren't isolated. Hotel-management acknowledgements, paranormal tours, and ghost-history websites all reference many of the same tales — the same rooms, the same phenomena — suggesting some durability to the folklore.

Hauntings Throughout the Hotel

The alleged activity doesn't stop at guest rooms. Some staff have described returning to meeting rooms or common areas moments after rearranging furniture —

only to find everything shifted back into its original place, according to [US Ghost Adventures](#). Employees working overnight shifts have also spoken of hearing footsteps and voices in otherwise empty spaces, experiences that have quietly circulated among staff rather than being publicly promoted.

One of the hotel's more colorful stories centers on a large ship's wheel displayed in the hotel's tavern — a nod to Salem's maritime heritage. On more than one occasion, guests say the wheel began to turn slowly, as though guided by unseen hands. For a building once tied to seafarers and sea captains, such stories feed directly into the eerie allure.

The hotel's ghostly lore has even drawn national-level attention: In 2007 the paranormal-investigation show *Ghost Hunters* visited the Hawthorne to film their investigation, an event that cemented its reputation among paranormal tourists.

Why the Holiday Season Makes the Hauntings Feel Sharper

Salem's reputation for witches and hauntings already invites a certain mindset of expectation. But winter — especially the holiday season — reframes the experience: fewer tourists, earlier nights, colder air, quiet streets, and a pervasive sense of stillness. Without the distraction of October crowds, guests are left alone with the building's age, its creaks, and its long memory.

That stillness makes ordinary hotel sounds — a door creaking, a pipe groaning, footsteps on distant floors — feel more intimate. Add in subtle holiday decoration or scent (pine wreaths, warm lighting), and the contrast between coziness and cold becomes a perfect stage for ghost stories.

There's also a psychological factor: Holidays stir memory, longing, and nostalgia. For travelers alone, or for couples and families far from home, a historic hotel like the Hawthorne can amplify emotion — and in emotional states, people tend to notice the unusual. In that way, the Hawthorne becomes not just a place to stay, but a mirror reflecting whatever guests carry with them into the season.

In this quieter frame of mind, even skeptics may find themselves listening more closely, questioning small disturbances they might otherwise dismiss, and wondering whether the hotel's stories persist precisely because winter encourages reflection as much as imagination, when silence makes absence feel occupied.

In short: The winter hush doesn't create ghosts, but it creates conditions where strange anomalies feel more personal, more immediate, more uncanny. ♦

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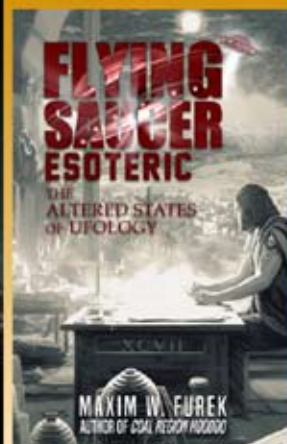
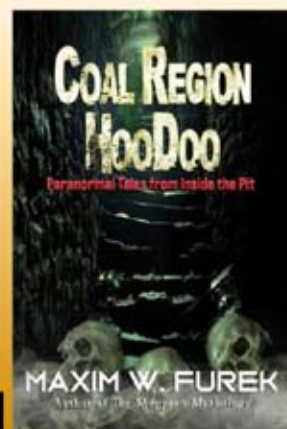
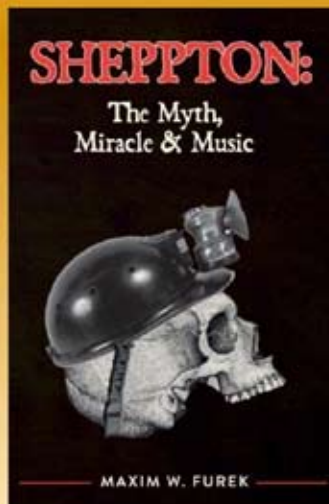


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The Valensole UFO Incident

France's Lavender Field Encounter

By Paul Dale Roberts, Halo Paranormal Investigations

The Valensole UFO incident stands as one of the most enduring and intriguing close-encounter cases in modern UFO history. Often referred to as “The Lavender Encounter,” the event occurred in the early morning hours of July 1, 1965, in the rural lavender fields near Valensole, a small town in the Provence region of southeastern France.

Unlike many UFO sightings that rely solely on fleeting visual impressions, the Valensole case is notable for its close-range observation, physical effects on the witness, and measurable traces left behind at the landing site.

A Close Encounter in the Lavender Fields

The witness, Maurice Masse, was a respected local farmer known for his reliability and quiet demeanor. On the morning of the incident, Masse was tending to his lavender field when he noticed an unfamiliar object resting among the rows. At first, he assumed it was a helicopter, a reasonable conclusion given the occasional agricultural or military aircraft in the area. As he approached, however, the object revealed itself to be something far stranger.

Masse described the craft as roughly oval or spherical in shape, approximately seven meters (about 23 feet) in diameter. It emitted a soft bluish-gray light and produced a low humming sound. The surface appeared metallic but smooth, with no visible seams, markings, or windows. Nearby, he observed two small humanoid figures standing beside the object.

According to Masse's account, the beings were approximately four feet tall, with large slanted eyes, pointed chins, and gray-green, tight-fitting clothing. Their appearance was unusual but not grotesque, and they moved with deliberate calm rather than haste. As Masse attempted to approach them, one of the beings turned toward him and pointed a small cylindrical device in his direction. Instantly, Masse found himself immobilized, unable to move or speak, though fully conscious.

The paralysis lasted only moments. The two beings returned to the craft, which then lifted off silently and accelerated away at extraordinary speed, disappearing into the sky. Once the craft departed, Masse regained his ability to move and later reported intense fatigue and lingering physiological effects, including disrupted sleep and unusual sensations that persisted for some time.

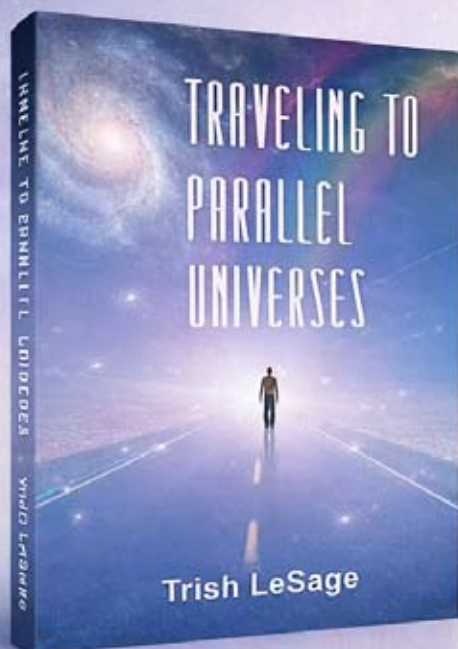


Artist Michael Buhler's impression of the UFO encounter.

Physical Evidence and Official Attention

What elevates the Valensole encounter beyond anecdotal testimony is the physical evidence documented afterward. Investigators examined the site and found hardened soil in the area where the object had reportedly landed. Scientific analysis revealed abnormal calcium deposits and compacted earth, inconsistent with typical agricultural activity. French government-affiliated researchers, including those connected to GEIPAN (the French aerospace investigation group), later acknowledged the physical anomalies, even while refraining from definitive conclusions about their cause.





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Maurice Masse in the lavender field where the UFO encounter took place.

The presence of humanoid occupants places the Valensole incident firmly in the category of a close encounter of the third kind, a classification reserved for sightings involving both a craft and its apparent occupants. Within UFO research circles, the case is frequently cited as one of the most credible encounters due to the witness's consistency, lack of financial motive, and the corroborating physical traces.

The incident attracted widespread attention in France and internationally, transforming Valensole from a quiet agricultural village into a point of fascination for UFO researchers. Decades later, the case continues to be discussed in scholarly and popular UFO literature, documentaries, and conferences. Notably, renowned ufologist Jacques Vallée remarked on the similarities between the Valensole craft and other well-documented UFO sightings. Vallée drew comparisons to the 1964 Socorro UFO incident, in which police officer Lonnie Zamora reported seeing an oval-shaped craft and small humanoid figures in New Mexico. Both cases share striking elements: close-range observation, small beings, rapid departure, and physical traces at the landing site.

In more recent years, researchers have also noted parallels between the Valensole craft and the so-called Tic Tac UFO, recorded during U.S. Navy exercises in 2004. While separated by decades and geography, these incidents feature objects described as smooth, featureless, capable of sudden acceleration, and operating beyond known aerodynamic limits. Some investigators have speculated that these similarities point to a shared origin or technology, though such conclusions remain speculative.

The enduring fascination with the Valensole case was renewed with the release of the 2024 film *Valensole 1965*, which dramatizes Maurice Masse's experience. While

the film takes some artistic liberties, it reflects the lasting cultural impact of the incident and underscores its importance within the broader UFO narrative.

Folklore, Landscape & the Limits of Interpretation

Valensole's lavender fields have also inspired regional folklore that predates the UFO encounter, including legends of a fairy named Lavandula, whose sorrowful tears were said to have created the violet blooms that define the landscape. Some writers have drawn symbolic parallels between this folklore and the UFO sighting, noting shared imagery of small beings and altered terrain. While such associations are culturally interesting, they remain speculative and are best understood as interpretive frameworks rather than evidence. In the context of the Valensole incident, the UFO encounter stands on its own merits, grounded in a specific date, location, witness, and physical aftermath.

Other paranormal legends in the surrounding Provence region — such as tales of dragon-like creatures in Vaucluse or apparitions in Les Baux-de-Provence — have occasionally been retroactively framed through a UFO lens. However, these stories are rooted in medieval folklore and ghost traditions rather than modern investigative data. While some enthusiasts suggest that historical sightings of “dragons” or “spirits” could represent misunderstood encounters with nonhuman intelligences, there is no direct evidence linking these legends to the Valensole UFO event.

Similarly, the Val d'Enfer (“Valley of Hell”) in Southern France, with its dramatic rock formations and ominous atmosphere, has inspired centuries of myth and is sometimes associated with supernatural experiences. The valley reportedly influenced Dante Alighieri's imagery in *The Divine Comedy*, though this connection is symbolic rather than historical. Accounts of dread or apparitions in the area reflect human responses to striking natural landscapes rather than documented anomalous phenomena.

When viewed in its proper context, the Valensole UFO incident remains the most compelling unexplained event associated with the region. Unlike folklore or ghost stories passed down through generations, the 1965 encounter is anchored by a precise timeline, a credible witness, and physical traces that defy simple explanation. More than half a century later, it continues to challenge assumptions about what may share our skies — and, occasionally, our fields.

Whether the Valensole craft represents advanced extraterrestrial technology, an unknown natural phenomenon, or something yet to be understood, the case persists as a cornerstone of UFO research. Its legacy lies not in myth, but in the unanswered questions it leaves behind — questions that continue to draw investigators back to the lavender fields of Provence. ♦



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THE ENDURING MYSTERY OF THE DJINN

By Corey Sharer

The Djinn — also spelled Jinn and often misnamed “genies” — are among the most enduring and enigmatic beings in human mythology. Long before they were reduced to wish-granting caricatures, Djinn occupied a far more complex role in ancient Arabian belief and Islamic theology. They are described as sentient beings created from “smokeless fire,” neither angel nor human, but something that exists in between — unseen, volatile, and profoundly powerful.

Unlike angels, who are made of light and bound to divine obedience, or humans, who are shaped from clay and anchored to the physical world, Djinn inhabit a liminal space between realms. They possess intelligence, emotion, and — most importantly — free will. This freedom makes them capable of extraordinary goodness or devastating harm, and it is precisely this unpredictability that has made them both feared and revered for centuries.

Islamic tradition holds that the Djinn were created before humankind. The *Qur’an* presents them as moral agents, fully responsible for their choices. The most well-known Djinn in Islamic scripture is Iblis, who refused God’s command to bow before Adam, not out of ignorance, but pride. His defiance led to his fall, and his story transformed the Djinn into powerful symbols of rebellion, ego, and the dangerous consequences of unchecked free will.

Yet Iblis does not define all Djinn. Just as humanity contains saints and monsters alike, so too do the Djinn include believers and rebels, helpers, and deceivers.

Encounters With the Unseen

Folklore places Djinn in the margins of the human world — deserts scorched by sun, abandoned houses, lonely crossroads, caves, and graveyards. These are places where boundaries feel thin, where the ordinary world seems to brush against something older and unseen. Djinn are said to move through the night and the unseen realm known as Al-Ghaib, appearing in countless forms.



They may take the shape of animals, vanish into dust or wind, or slip unnoticed into human consciousness. Some traditions describe them as whisperers, planting thoughts that confuse, tempt, or mislead. Encounters with Djinn in folklore are rarely neutral — they bring either aid at great cost or misfortune that lingers long after the encounter ends.

Western interpretations dramatically altered the Djinn's image. Through translations of *One Thousand and One Nights*, especially tales such as "Aladdin and the Magic Lamp," Djinn were recast as obedient, flamboyant beings bound to objects and forced to grant wishes. While entertaining, this portrayal strips the Djinn of their autonomy and menace. In traditional belief, Djinn are not servants. They do not exist to fulfill human desires. Any interaction with them is a negotiation — and often a dangerous one.

Classical lore describes many types of Djinn, each embodying different traits and fears. A Marid is immense and powerful, often associated with the sea and storms. An Ifrit is fierce, fiery beings

known for strength and hostility. Ghouls haunt graveyards and desolate roads, preying on travelers, while Silat are cunning shape-shifters, masters of deception.

These distinctions reveal how deeply Djinn mythology reflects human anxieties about nature, death, temptation, and the unknown.

The Djinn in the Modern Imagination

Today, Djinn continue to evolve in modern storytelling, appearing in literature, film, and art as villains, guardians, tricksters, or tragic figures caught between worlds. Yet beneath every reinterpretation lies the same enduring symbolism. Djinn represent humanity's fascination with what cannot be seen, the tension between choice and consequence, and the thin veil separating order from chaos.

Whether encountered through faith, folklore, or fiction, the Djinn remain powerful reminders that not everything unseen is harmless — and not everything powerful can be controlled. ♦



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THE KNOCKS ON MY LIVING ROOM WINDOW



By Anonymous

The year was 1988. I was about 18 years old, but the memory is still sharp. Time hasn't dulled it the way it has so many other moments from that age. I can still picture the house, the light coming through the windows, and the exact feeling that settled in my chest when it happened.

It was the middle of the day. My parents were gone, and I was home alone in our two-story house. Nothing felt unusual at first. The sun was shining, the neighborhood was quiet, and I was stretched out on the couch in the family room watching television. It was the kind of ordinary afternoon you don't give much thought to — the kind that feels safe simply because it's familiar.

Then I heard it. Bang. Bang. Bang.

The sound came from the large front living room

window one room over, the one that faced the cul-de-sac at the end of our street. It was loud and sharp, not a gentle tap or a random noise, but three distinct bangs in quick succession. My first reaction was practical. Maybe a large truck had driven by and rattled the window. Maybe there had been a small earthquake. Maybe one of my friends was messing with me.

Or maybe it was *something* else.

You see, my house was haunted. That wasn't a dramatic claim in our family — it was just a fact of life. Strange things happened there regularly. Apparitions had been seen. Lights and electronics behaved oddly. Disembodied footsteps moved through empty rooms. Voices sometimes carried through the house when no one else was home. Compared to all of that, unexplained noises were almost routine.

Still, this felt different.

I jumped up from the couch and ran into the kitchen, stopping at the doorway to the living room. I peered around the corner and waited, heart pounding, telling myself there would be a rational explanation.

Bang. Bang. Bang. It happened again, just as forcefully as before. This time, I could see the window clearly. Nothing was there. No person. No object. No movement outside. The street was empty. No trucks rolled by. The ground wasn't shaking. There was nothing that could have caused it.

Then it happened again. Bang. Bang. Bang.

Whatever it was, it wanted my attention — and it had it. But that didn't mean I was willing to engage. A wave of fear hit me all at once, followed quickly by anger. I wasn't curious in that moment. I wasn't brave. I just wanted it to stop.

"Stop it!" I shouted into the empty room.

I didn't wait for a response. I ran straight out the front door, got into my car, and sat there with the doors locked and windows rolled up for the next 30 minutes. I didn't go far. I didn't leave the driveway. I just needed distance — some kind of barrier between myself and whatever was inside that house.

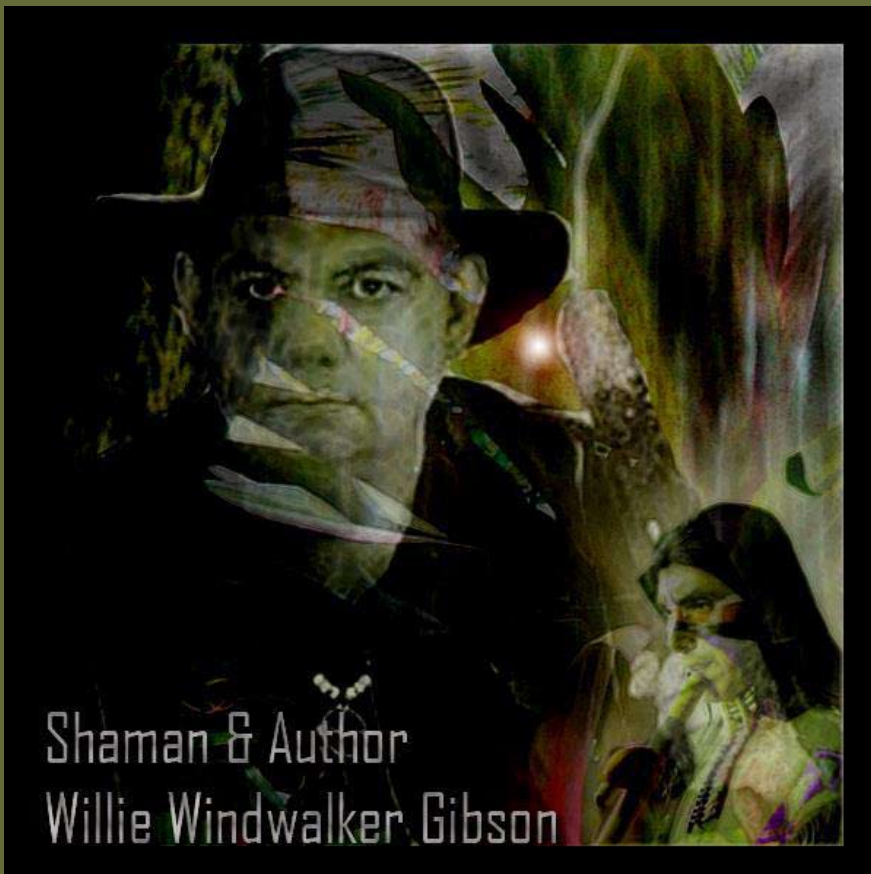
Eventually, a friend stopped by to check on me. I told them I was fine. I didn't explain what had happened. I felt embarrassed, even though I didn't fully understand why.



How do you explain something that has no clear shape, no visible cause, and no easy explanation?

I went back inside later, but the house felt different after that. Quieter, yes — but also watchful. To this day, I don't know what caused the knocking. I only know that it was real, it was intentional, and it happened in broad daylight when there was nowhere for fear to hide.

Some experiences don't fade with time. They wait patiently, just beneath the surface, ready to remind you that not everything needs darkness to make itself known. ♦



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THE INVISIBLE MAN

A HAUNTING IN CURTIS PARK

BY PAUL DALE ROBERTS, HALO PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS

On January 25, 2025, while walking my dogs Champagne and Ire, I received a call on the paranormal hotline. Mary from Curtis Park in Sacramento, California, was on the other end of the line, clearly shaken. She explained that her father, David, had passed away about six months earlier, and only recently strange activity had begun occurring in her home.

Mary said the activity was unsettling and frightening, though she did not feel it was malicious. She believed the presence was her father. While she described the haunting as harmless, she was deeply disturbed and wanted it to stop. Mary explained that her father had been an avid reader, with a personal library that included *The Lord of the Rings*, *1984*, *War and Peace*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Don Quixote*, and many other books. In his memory, Mary had kept several of his personal belongings: his *Bible*, many of his books, his eyeglasses, his pocket watch, three pairs of his shoes, and other cherished items.

The Eyeglasses That Would Not Stay Put

Much of the activity, she said, centered on her father's eyeglasses. On more than one occasion, Mary found the glasses resting on the seat of her father's favorite chair. She knew for a fact that she had placed them on the nightstand before going to bed. Somehow, during the night, they would reappear on the chair. On another evening, she discovered *War and Peace* opened on the nightstand, with her father's eyeglasses carefully placed on top of the book.

The moment that finally pushed Mary to call for help came one night when she walked down the hallway. She saw the eyeglasses hovering in midair, temples open, positioned at her father's eye level. It was as if someone invisible were wearing them.

"As soon as I saw that, the eyeglasses fell to the floor," Mary told me.

She added, "I love my dad, but that was too much. It scared me to death."

Mary asked me if I had ever seen the movie *The Invisible Man*. I told her I had. She said that was exactly what it reminded her of — an unseen presence made vis-



The eyeglasses hovered in midair at eye level, as if someone invisible were wearing them, before suddenly dropping to the floor.

ible only by an object it carried. She then asked if I had ever encountered anything like this before. My answer was yes.

I shared with Mary an experience from my time in the Army, when I visited Oberhofen Castle in Switzerland, located along the shores of Lake Thun. The castle has long been associated with paranormal reports. Tourists and locals alike have described hearing footsteps and seeing shadowy figures. The most famous spirit associated with the castle is Agnes, a young woman who died there. Her ghost is said to wander the grounds in search of her lost love.

Witnesses have reported seeing Agnes as a full-

bodied apparition near the lake, sobbing and holding a handkerchief. As she fades away, her body dematerializes until only the handkerchief remains, floating in the air. Agnes becomes “the invisible girl,” her presence known only by the object she carries. I explained to Mary that her father’s manifestation reminded me strongly of that phenomenon — except instead of a handkerchief, David was using his eyeglasses.

Investigation, Cleansing, and Blessing

Mary asked if I would come to her home to conduct a blessing and address both the house and her father’s personal items. She also asked if it was possible to help her father move on into the light. I agreed and brought along Wish Fire, our psychic medium.

Upon arrival, I conducted a brief investigation to see if I could gather any evidence of paranormal activity. My EMF detector spiked for several minutes near David’s eyeglasses. During the session, I also captured a wheezing sound on audio. David had been 87 years old when he passed and suffered from COPD. When Mary listened to the EVP, she became emotional and said her father often wheezed in exactly that way.

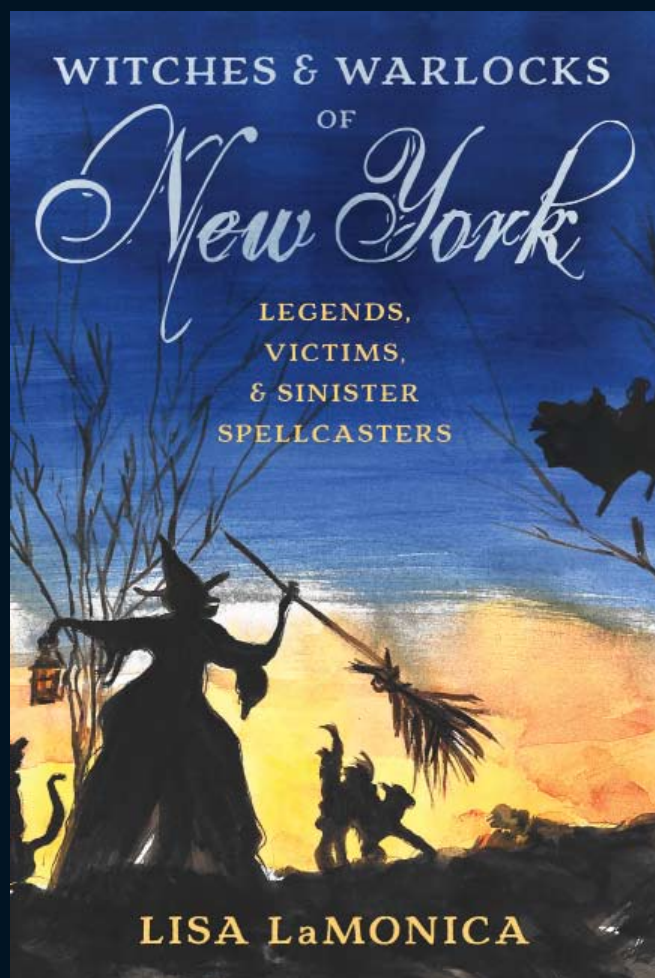
Wish Fire detected a strong presence near David’s study, which coincided with where I recorded the wheez-



Oberhofen Castle, perched along the shores of Lake Thun, is long rumored to be haunted by a sorrowful spirit who appears and vanishes without warning.

ing EVP. She then performed a metaphysical cleansing of the home, calling upon her spirit guides and angels to assist in guiding this lost soul into a higher dimension — into the light.

Afterward, I conducted a Roman Catholic house blessing, asking the angels to help escort David onward and bring peace to the home. The house blessing was successful, and the entity did not return. ♦



New York has a surprisingly rich and lasting history of witches and witchcraft.

“Witches and Warlocks of New York” is a collection of legends and historical accounts about witches and warlocks from the Empire State.

Included are a history and origins of witchcraft in New York State and historical tales of “witches” across the state, including Hulda, the witch who was the origin behind a Brothers Grimm fairy tale and inspired parts of Washington Irving’s “Sleepy Hollow.” Plus, the East-hampton Witch Elizabeth Garlick, accused and tried 35 years before the Salem witch trials.

Available on Amazon

THE STRANGE CASE OF THE HOLCOMB–GRAVES ABDUCTIONS

By Cheryl Lynn Carter

Clare Holcomb was a skilled horse trainer at Horseshoe Stables in Indianapolis, Indiana. After achieving professional success and building a strong reputation, she was living the life she had always wanted. Her days followed a familiar rhythm shaped by long hours, hard work, and a deep connection to the horses she trained — a routine she had no reason to abandon. Nothing in her professional or personal life suggested that a sudden, irreversible change was coming.

One morning, she was on her usual drive to work — until something unusual happened. For no apparent reason, she exited the highway far too early, turned around, and drove back home. Once there, without hesitation, she called the office and resigned. This was completely out of character, yet she felt she was being led in another direction. Within two weeks, she sold her house, packed what would fit into her car, and headed to Virginia.

Diana Graves, age 44, lived in Catlett, Virginia, where she was a full-time probation officer for the Commonwealth of Virginia and the owner of Moonraker Stables, where she bred horses. She needed help in the stables, and placed a newspaper ad for a stable manager.

In 1987, Holcomb, then 47, was browsing the classified section of the newspaper when her attention paused on an ad for a full-time position on a horse farm. She felt immediately drawn to the opportunity and responded.

The following day, she drove to Moonraker Stables, owned by Graves. Graves had interviewed other candidates, but none seemed right. This interview was different. Holcomb was comfortable around the horses, and Graves felt an instant connection, as though she had known her forever. She hired her on the spot. Likewise, Holcomb felt a strange familiarity with Graves, as if they had met before or shared a past connection she could not place.

A Night on the Road That Changed Everything

On December 15, 1991, at approximately 7:30 p.m., Holcomb was returning home after a meeting in nearby



Diana Graves and Clare Holcomb were two accomplished horse professionals whose chance meeting in rural Virginia led them to believe they shared a lifelong, deeply unsettling connection shaped by repeated encounters they attributed to extraterrestrial abductions.

Winchester. She drove along a country road lined with old oaks and hickories. That night, however, nothing felt ordinary.

About six miles from the farm, she noticed two lights in the sky. At first, she assumed it was a plane and became concerned because it appeared to be flying unusually low. Then she realized there was no sound at all. Fearing mechanical trouble, she pulled to the side of the road to investigate.

Suddenly, she was blinded by an intense light. Frozen with fear, she had no idea what was happening, yet the experience felt strangely familiar. Moments later, the light

vanished. Her next memory was the sensation of being dropped violently back into her truck from above.

Even more terrifying, she found herself driving with the truck tilted on two wheels. After regaining control, she continued the remaining five miles to the farm, unable to account for an hour and a half of missing time. Her earlobes were inflamed and bleeding, her earrings inexplicably inserted backward.

Missing Time and Growing Fear

Fearing she was experiencing a nervous breakdown, she confided in her close friend Graves. Believing Holcomb was simply exhausted, Graves decided to take a few days off so Holcomb could rest. She hoped life would return to normal.

It did not. A week later, Holcomb again encountered strange lights while driving home from another meeting and again experienced missing time. Graves began to realize that something was wrong, though she did not yet understand what. She recalled an earlier night when they had both observed strange lights hovering over the barn — an event they had dismissed at the time. Now, it felt ominous.

Unsure where to turn, Graves searched the phone book for information on UFOs, never expecting to find anything. To her surprise, she discovered a listing for the

Strange lights, lost hours, and memories that refused to stay buried.

Fund for UFO Research in Alexandria, Virginia. She called and spoke with Richard Hall, one of the organization's leaders. After listening to their account, Hall found the women intelligent and credible and agreed to examine their case.

When Hall later visited to interview Holcomb, the women expected reassurance — perhaps an explanation that such experiences were rare and unlikely to recur. Instead, Hall offered no such comfort. Familiar with similar cases, he recommended that Holcomb undergo hypnotic regression with clinical psychologist David Ruxer in Fairfax, Virginia.

Recovered Memories and an Unsettling Connection

During the sessions, Holcomb began recalling memories that had long been buried. She remembered lying on a steel table while being examined by a creature — gray-



The Fund for UFO Research, based in Alexandria, Virginia, was a nonprofit organization active in the late 20th century that investigated reported UFO sightings and close-encounter cases through field research, witness interviews, and case documentation.

skinned, about four feet tall, with an oversized head and large black eyes. Listening to these recollections made Graves deeply uneasy.

Holcomb also recalled an incident from when she was 12 years old. On a school picnic, she remembered feeling impatient as she waited for “someone,” though she did not know who. Wandering away alone, she encountered a girl wearing a school uniform with an emblem on the jacket and speaking with an English accent. Together, they walked into the woods, where they were abducted.

When Holcomb described the girl, Graves realized the description matched her own childhood appearance. She retrieved a jacket from her closet — one she had worn while attending school in England — and it matched Holcomb's description exactly. She could not explain why she had kept it all those years.

Though difficult to accept, the memories were impossible to dismiss. The women began sharing childhood recollections, including claims that the beings instructed them to manipulate objects using only their minds.

They became convinced their meeting in 1991 was no coincidence. They believed they had first been brought together as children as part of an alien experiment and reunited again as adults. In total, they estimated they had been abducted approximately 40 times, many of them together.

They longed to live ordinary lives — but struggled to understand how that was possible when they believed they remained objects of otherworldly interest. ♦

YOUR AURA'S DAILY REPORT

HOW TO READ AND RESPOND TO YOUR ENERGY FIELD

By Chad Wilson

Most of us check the weather before leaving the house. Some of us glance at step counts, heart rate, or sleep scores on our phones. But there's another "daily report" we rarely think to read — the subtle energetic field that surrounds us all day long: the aura.

The word alone can sound abstract or overly esoteric, but at its core, your aura is simply the energetic expression of your physical body, emotional state, mental focus, and spiritual well-being. You don't need special equipment or psychic abilities to work with it. You're already sensing it — you just may not realize that's what you're doing.

What an Aura Really Is (In Plain Terms)

Think of your aura as an extension of your nervous system and emotional landscape. It's the energetic "atmosphere" you carry with you. When people say someone feels calming, intense, draining, or uplifting, they're responding to that person's energy field, not their words.

Your aura shifts constantly. It tightens under stress. It expands when you feel safe or inspired. It becomes heavy when emotions go unprocessed and light when you feel clear and grounded. This isn't mystical fluff — it's an intuitive reading of information your body and subconscious are already broadcasting.

The problem isn't that we don't have an aura. It's that we're rarely taught to notice it.

Learning to Read Your Own Energy

Your aura gives you feedback all day long. You can think of it as a dashboard warning system — subtle at first, but very clear if you pay attention. Here are some common "signals" your energy field sends:

- Sudden exhaustion that doesn't match your physical activity often signals energetic overload — too many emotional inputs, too much mental noise, or prolonged exposure to stressful environments.
- Irritability or agitation without a clear cause can point to energetic boundary issues. You may be absorbing other people's emotions or tension.



- Feeling light, focused, or expansive usually means your energy is flowing cleanly and your nervous system feels regulated.
 - Heaviness in the chest or shoulders often shows up when emotional weight hasn't been processed or released.
- None of this requires labeling feelings as "good" or "bad." Your aura isn't judging you. It's communicating.
- A useful daily practice is simply asking yourself: *How do I feel in my body right now?* Not what you think, not what you should feel — but what's actually present.



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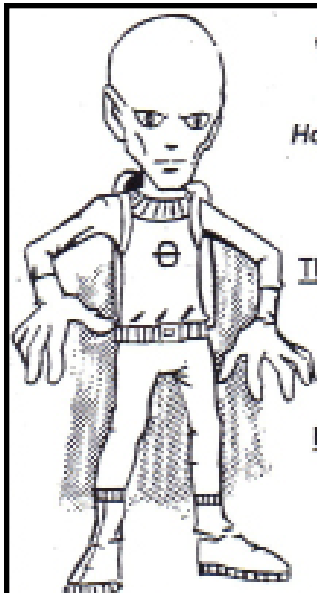


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Why Modern Life Drains the Aura

Here's my opinion, and I'll stand by it: Modern life is energetically loud. Constant notifications, crowded spaces, emotional labor, artificial lighting, digital engagement and unresolved stress all tax the energy field. We're expected to remain "on" far longer than our systems evolved to handle.

Many people assume they're burned out because they're weak or unmotivated. More often, they're energetically overstimulated without enough time to reset. The aura becomes cluttered, frayed, and reactive — and the body follows.

This is why rest alone doesn't always fix exhaustion. You can sleep eight hours and still wake up feeling off if your energy field never had a chance to clear.

Simple Ways to Cleanse Your Aura Throughout the Day

You don't need elaborate rituals or crystals to keep your energy clear. What matters is intention, consistency, and nervous system regulation. Here are some simple exercises to try:

Visualization: One of the simplest tools is imagining light moving through and around you. Picture a soft, neutral light washing down from your head to your feet, carrying away tension and static. This works because the brain responds to imagery almost as strongly as physical input.

Mindful breathing: Slow, deep breathing resets the nervous system and immediately affects your energy field. Inhale through the nose, exhale slowly through the mouth. Even three intentional breaths can shift your internal state.

Nature contact: Time outside isn't optional — it's corrective. Trees, water, soil, and natural light help regulate

human energy in ways technology cannot replicate. If you feel scattered, step outside and let your senses recalibrate.

Energetic boundaries: You don't have to absorb everything around you. A simple internal statement such as, "What's not mine can pass through," helps reinforce energetic limits, especially in crowded or emotionally charged spaces.

Protecting Your Aura Without Fear

Protection doesn't mean building walls. It means staying coherent in your own energy. Healthy protection feels calm, not defensive. It allows connection without depletion. If you notice yourself feeling drained after certain interactions, that's not a failure — it's information.

Pay attention to patterns. Who energizes you? What environments calm you? When do you feel most like yourself? These observations are far more valuable than any external advice.

Treating Your Aura as Daily Maintenance

Your energy field doesn't need perfection. It needs attention. Just as you wouldn't ignore hunger or exhaustion, don't ignore energetic signals. Small, consistent practices are far more effective than dramatic interventions once you're already depleted.

Think of your aura as something you check in with, not something you fix. The goal isn't to glow constantly — it's to remain responsive, grounded, and aware.

When you start reading your aura's daily report, you stop pushing through discomfort and start working with yourself instead of against yourself. And that shift alone can change how you move through the world. ♦



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THE CHRISTMAS VISIT

By Willie Windwalker Gibson

Christmas is the time of year when families gather to be together. For many people, it's the only time everyone can be in the same place at once. It's when you notice how much the kids have grown and how family members have changed over the past year. Christmas is also a time of remembering — especially those who are missing, the ones who have passed on but are never truly gone.

I remember one Christmas about 40 years ago when I was a police officer. I was 25 years old and out on patrol in my police cruiser. It was close to Christmas, and I was assigned to the Kentucky Fairgrounds. I had parked the cruiser and was walking the grounds, checking the buildings to make sure everything was locked and secure.

As I walked through the quiet fairgrounds, my thoughts turned to my grandfather Willie, whom I was named after. He loved Christmas, and more than anything, he loved giving me Christmas presents. One year, when I was five, he bought me a train set. It was the best gift I could have imagined. It even came with a train station.

I remember sitting in the living room of my mom and dad's apartment with him, setting up the tracks and running the train. I can still hear his laughter and remember how much joy he took in watching me play.

That night at the fairgrounds, something changed as I walked. I began to sense an energy — a feeling that someone was with me. I couldn't see anyone, but I could feel a presence nearby. There was no fear, only warmth and love. It was a familiar feeling; one I had felt many times before with my grandfather. In that moment, I knew that simply remembering him had brought him close.

I said out loud, "Hi, Papaw."

Almost immediately, I felt a hug around my waist. It was gentle and comforting, just as I remembered. I kept walking and talking, sharing my thoughts and memories. I knew he was there, listening and smiling. I



could picture him clearly in my mind, just enjoying the moment.

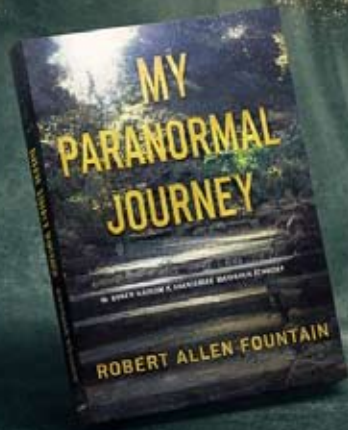
I walked for hours that night, talking as if he were right beside me. The cold didn't matter, even though the temperature was in the thirties. I wasn't alone. I was with my papaw. That was my Christmas visit with him.

So, please remember that just because someone isn't physically present at Christmas doesn't mean they aren't there in spirit. Love doesn't disappear, and neither do the bonds we carry with us. I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday, surrounded by family — seen and unseen — and filled with warm memories that last a lifetime. ♦

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